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**GOVERNOR GRAY DAVIS AND SECRETARY OF THE
INTERIOR BABBITT ANNOUNCE FRAMEWORK FOR
CALIFORNIA'S WATER FUTURE**

SACRAMENTO – Setting a decisive new course for California's economy and environment, Governor Gray Davis, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, and Senator Dianne Feinstein today announced agreement on a bold new approach to improving the way California manages its water.

"Today California is launching the largest and most comprehensive ecosystem restoration and water management program in the world," Governor Davis said. "The CALFED Bay-Delta Program is an unprecedented effort between state and federal governments, local agencies, the public and private businesses to build a framework for managing our most precious natural resource.

"But we will not succeed without making and carrying out tough decisions. As governor of this State, I am proud of what we've accomplished and I will make it my business to ensure that this effort is carried out in a balanced, responsible manner," Governor Davis continued.

The historic plan, entitled "California's Water Future: A Framework for Action," presents a framework to move forward on actions to solve the most pressing aspects of California's water supply and reliability and environmental restoration problems. A product of five years of intensive study, scientific analysis and public comment, the framework also supplies an overarching vision for how the separate elements and actions create a balanced and workable solution.

The plan focuses on the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and pledges to restore the Bay-Delta ecosystem, improve water quality, enhance water supply reliability and assure long-term stability for agricultural, urban and environmental uses. The plan promises benefits to the environment, California's economy, and to urban and agricultural users.

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The agreement integrates actions from several state, federal and regional water management and ecosystem restoration efforts, including the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study and the Bay Area Regional Water Recycling Program.

The final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR), on the Bay-Delta Program is scheduled to be released later this summer.

The long-term plan relies on several key components that incorporate a high level of stakeholder participation and a strong commitment to continuous, independent scientific review of actions and decisions.

While the proposed CALFED plan will take years to implement, Governor Davis, Secretary Babbitt and Senator Feinstein today focused on proposed actions to take place over the next seven years – Stage 1 of the program. Funding will come from state and federal appropriations, California Propositions 204, passed in 1996, and Proposition 13, which passed earlier this year, and local revenue sources.

Highlights of the plan include:

- \$1 billion invested in ecosystem restoration projects (ERP) in the Delta, the Sacramento River corridor, and Bay-Delta tributaries -- the largest restoration effort in the United States.
- \$300 million invested in CALFED's Watershed Program to fund local projects that contribute substantially to CALFED goals for ecosystem restoration, water quality improvement and water supply reliability.
- \$1 billion invested in storage projects, increasing water storage by 1.5 million acre-feet, with near-term focus on groundwater storage in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, Shasta lake expansion, Los Vaqueros Reservoir expansion, and in-Delta storage.
- Improvements and modifications to the water conveyance system. Actions could include new fish screens at State and federal pumping plants, operable barriers in the South Delta, an intertie connecting State and federal pumping facilities, and a new bypass canal at San Luis Reservoir to improve waster quality for Silicon Valley.
- Investing \$800 million in water quality programs to continuously improve Delta water quality for all users. Actions include developing a Bay Area blending/exchange program; addressing drainage problems in the San Joaquin Valley, implementing a source water protection program, and investing in treatment technology development.

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- Investing \$1.3 billion in loan and grant programs for agricultural and urban water use efficiency.
- Developing a \$1.6 billion program for water recycling capitol improvement projects.
- Investing \$450 million in Delta levee system maintenance and improvements.
- 380,000 acre-feet of water per year for the Environmental Water Account.
- Providing regulatory assurance under the federal Endangered Species Act for the first four years of Stage 1, based on the availability of water from existing regulation, the Environmental Water Account combined with the ERP and the ability to obtain additional assets, should they be necessary. The federal and state fishery agencies will provide assurance, subject to legal requirements, that there will be no reductions beyond existing regulatory levels in deliveries to state and federal project water users resulting from measures to protect fish.
- Improved water supply reliability through integration of storage, conveyance, EWA, water use efficiency, water quality and water transfer programs. These actions are expected to demonstrate substantial improvements within the first four years of Stage 1 of CALFED. For the first four years of Stage 1 implementation, while these actions are developed, water deliveries are expected to remain at historic levels for most water users who depend upon water from the Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project. Deliveries to CVP agricultural users south of the Delta are expected to increase to approximately 65 to 70 percent of their contract totals.

The CALFED Bay-Delta Program, initiated in 1995, is an unprecedented collaboration among state and federal agencies and the state's leading urban agricultural and environmental interests. Its mission is to develop a long-term, comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water supply reliability for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system, the intricate waterways created at the junction of the San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers and the watershed that feeds them. The Bay-Delta system is a critically important part of California's natural environment. It supplies drinking water for more than 22 million Californians, irrigation water for more than 7 million acres of the world's most productive farmland and supports 120 fish and wildlife species.

In June 1999, CALFED released a draft programmatic EIS/EIR outlining its draft plan for restoring ecological health in the Bay-Delta, providing water supply reliability for all beneficial uses and improving water quality.

Please see the CALFED Bay-Delta Program at www.ca.gov/pdf/fnlfrmwk.pdf.

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